

Mary Helen Roberts

Vice Chair Human Services

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Think Locally, Act Individually

Sometimes “thinking globally” can be overwhelming. It’s hard to connect our personal actions with collapsing ice shelves in Antarctica. So instead, think locally. What can **you** do to improve water quality in Puget Sound or reduce traffic? Here are some links to help get you started:



■ <http://www.greentagsusa.org/greentags/calculator/>

There are many websites that let you calculate your carbon footprint, but this one by the Bonneville Environmental Foundation is specifically tailored to the Pacific Northwest.

■ www.communitytransit.org and www.soundtransit.org

While gas prices are at records highs, alternatives to driving continue to grow. Community Transit and Sound Transit both service the 21st District. Their web sites include route maps and schedules. Community Transit also has links to vanpools and rideshare opportunities. Another website, www.fueleconomy.gov, lets you compare the fuel economy of new & used vehicles, find out where the lowest gas prices are, and learn more about hybrid vehicles.

■ www.snopud.com

This website may help you decrease your monthly energy costs, while increasing your home’s environmental friendliness. Did you know the Snohomish County PUD has a rebate program for customers who make energy-efficient home improvements, such as heating and weatherization? Learn more online, or call their Energy Hotline at 425-783-1700 (toll-free 1-877-783-1700 outside the Everett local calling area).

Snohomish County PUD and JACO Environmental have also teamed up to offer an incentive to PUD customers who want get rid of an old refrigerator or freezer. JACO will pick up your old unit for free, and you’ll even get a \$30 check. Units must be 1995 models or older. To schedule a pick-up, call 1-877-577-0510. This program runs through 2009.

■ www.wafarmersmarkets.com/market_directory

Where are the farmer’s markets in Snohomish County? Find out where you can pick up locally-grown produce and support local farmers by going to the Washington State Farmers Market Association website. Includes hours/dates of operation and contact numbers.

And one more worthwhile website:

■ www.chrisjordan.com

This session, one of my fellow legislators received an email from his daughter with the above link. It depicts an art exhibit – “Running the Numbers” – showing the amount of waste generated by our society. I highly recommend taking a moment to scroll through the images – you will be truly amazed.

State Representative
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21st District

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Special Report on the Environment

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21st Legislative District
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- Human Services, Vice Chair
- Higher Education
- Early Learning & Children’s Services

Special Report on the Environment

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21st Legislative District

Special Report on the Environment



April 2008

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2008 Legislative Session has adjourned and it's time to sort through what was accomplished. Since it was a short session, adopting Supplemental Budgets was our primary responsibility. A sense of caution came early in the session when we learned that the state's revenue forecast was over \$420 million below what was previously anticipated. Our response included keeping over \$850 million in reserves and initiating efforts to shore up our on-going economic growth.

This district will benefit from legislation granting a tax break to aerospace industry suppliers and vendors. Our 2008 supplemental operating budget also includes \$3 million for aerospace apprenticeships to encourage more people to enter this high-demand field.

There was also an emphasis on environmental issues reflecting both the growing concern about global warming and our commitment to preserve Washington's beauty, quality of life and natural resources. The legislature initiated promoting and creating "green jobs" to energize this new industry while helping keep our economy stable.

This newsletter highlights other landmark environmental measures while providing ideas and links to resources that discuss what each of us can do. To do my part, I want to make this newsletter my final one printed on paper. Unless you request otherwise, I'd like to take greater advantage of the communication opportunities the internet offers. Additionally, it will save both tax dollars and a few trees.

Let me know what you think. If you have questions, concerns or comments, please feel free to contact me via e-mail or telephone. Although the session is over, I am still available.

Thank you for reading.

Mary Helen Roberts
State Representative

2008 Session Available "On Demand" in Web Video

TVW, the statewide cable television network that provides unedited gavel-to-gavel coverage of the State Legislature, maintains a comprehensive web video archive of all the committee hearings and floor debates of the 2008 legislative session: www.tvw.org



WHAT WE DID:

Promoting a Green Economy



Washington continues to enjoy record-low unemployment. We'd like to keep it that way, while also becoming a leader in promoting **clean-energy jobs**. This session, we passed a bill creating a program to train and transition workers to these family-wage jobs beginning in 2009, and tripling the number of green economy jobs by 2020. The state will research the labor market to find out where the green jobs will be and develop recruitment and training strategies to get workers into them.

WHAT WE DID:

Helping Communities & Local Governments

Climate change may be a global problem, but there are local solutions we can implement right here in the 21st District. Local governments will be given a range of tools to measure greenhouse gas emissions in their areas thanks to a bill that cleared the legislature this year. It also establishes a competitive grant program to giving funding to municipalities that are doing things to **fight global warming locally**.

We also recognized the importance of trees. Forests aren't just for the wilderness – trees enhance the quality of life in more populated areas too, as well as improve property values and air quality. They also reduce storm water runoff, which **protects the health of Puget Sound**. The "Evergreen Communities Act" passed this session will help local governments adopt plans and ordinances to keep more trees. The result? Cleaner, greener, more livable communities. Is there room in your yard for another tree?



WHAT WE DID:

Keeping Children Healthy

A child's brain is precious. It is also very vulnerable. Research shows that babies are being exposed to harmful chemicals even while in the womb because of industrial pollution and toxins in our environment. Some toxins, such as lead, are known to be harmful to developing brains.

This year we passed **The Children's Safe Products Act**, which sharply limits the levels of lead, cadmium and phthalates – three toxic chemicals –



in toys and other children's products sold in our state. This legislation is groundbreaking, but it was not without controversy. Legislators put the interests of children first and overwhelmingly passed the measure.

One issue we will continue to pursue next year is a requirement that our children be tested for lead exposure. Although lead has been eliminated over the past 30 years from products like paint and gasoline, as we have seen it is still present in items like imported

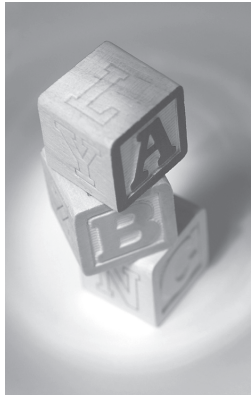
toys and candy. It can also be present in soil. Because lead can cause numerous health problems for kids, we need to find out if it is a problem in our communities. Testing children would give us the necessary data to know for sure.

Pesticides are one way kids can be exposed to lead. This year's budget also included funding to help school districts find **healthier alternatives to pesticide use** in their properties and buildings. Going to school shouldn't mean being exposed to hazardous chemicals.

Finally, we made it easier for our public schools



and food banks to get fresh fruits and vegetables from our local farms. The **"Local Farms, Healthy Kids"** bill will create new relationships between our farmers and our schools, which is good for the economy and good for our children's health.



Let's Go Paperless!

Would you be willing to receive this newsletter and other legislative updates via email? It would save paper – and taxpayer dollars. Send an email to: roberts.maryhelen@leg.wa.gov to add yourself to our electronic mailing list.